/16 cont./

788 *795 798 At the tomb of the Master there is always a pious crowd whose meditation, even though sincere, allows the joy at being in so famous and holy a place to show through. If they can, the pilgrims walk around the tomb three times while reciting the consecrated formula: "In the name of God the Clement, the Merciful. May God bless our Lord Mohammed, the Envoy of God, and save him." Then each of them puts down his mite and takes a handful of the sand surrounding the base of the tomb, [789] which is regarded as a powerful talisman capable of extricating the one who possesses it from every difficult situation.

On the tomb of Amadou Moustapha the pilgrim meditates and leaves a small offering, but does not pick up any sand.

One does not leave these holy places without spending a moment in the mosque.

The latter, during the whole pilgrimage, never empties; people come and go, chat there, and rest there. It is no longer a place of prayer and meditation; for the moment it is a work-yard which one visits, rather than a sacred monument where one meditates, but, the visit ended, one returns from there proud of knowing the greatest mosque in Senegal, proud of having climbed to the top of its minarets.

/17/ Upon leaving there, the pilgrims go, in groups or alone, to the home of the marabout to whom they are directly attached, and they also take an offering to him.

The last trip of the pilgrimage is the visit to the cemetery. This is laid out around the Sacred Baobab (Goui Tékhé), at the foot of which Amadou Bamba had the supernatural vision "of the fish which supports the world," indicating to him that he had indeed arrived at the place where he was to build Touba. A little enclosure marks the site where he had that vision. The most educated and the most pious pilgrims meditate and pray there; the others, and especially the women, content themselves with visiting the graves, particularly those of Aminata Lo, wife of the Founder and mother of Amadou Moustapha, of Babacar M'Backé, son of the Sérigne Bamba, dead at an early

[9 cont.]

787 After having recited the required prayers, one expresses his particular desire in a whisper while shielding the mouth with the right hand.

Then one lies down in a quiet and suitable place, on the right side, placing the right hand under the ear.

787 878 [791] Drugs and substances: Many drugs are provided for facilitating dreaming, sometimes by the mou'abbirs (who are relatively very rare in Senegal) and sometimes by other experienced persons.

The use of the roots of bakis or of sindièngne (a kind of creeping plant common in the western part of Senegal) is very widespread; if one falls asleep with a toothpick of bakis or sindièngne in his mouth, he will have frightful visions in which demons, the dead, and supernatural beings appear.

The same result is obtained if, before lying down, one takes a solution of salted water in which roots of sindièngne have fermented for quite a long time, the effect of which is both purgative and stimulative.

[302] Among other substances, the extract called kaoulâne (sometimes used in the form of a lotion for the face), liquid myrrh, opium, etc. should be mentioned.

787 [782] More rarely, fumigation is practiced in a sealed and isolated hut, in which honey or incense is burned. Obviously, in this case, the procedure may be completed by one of the above practices.

[778] [789] Magical means: Throughout Senegal (as is well-known) one finds an enormous number of talismans (for example, the khâtim, magical designs made up of names, characters, and figures which possess a kind of supernatural power), the aim of which is to evoke favorable dreams; their form varies according to the desire that the believer wants to realize.

Bohumil Holas

(Ifan, Dakar)